

SR

april 5, 1995

Student Review

an independent forum for student thought



"Four Barbras"

Amey

Year 9 Issue 18

Calendar

FILM

*International Cinema, 250 SWKT, 378-5751. Apr. 4-8: *Zentropa and Nostalgia*. Call for showtimes.

*Tower Theatre, 9th E. & 9th S., SLC, 297-4041. Mar. 31-Apr. 6: *Mrs. Parker and a Vicious Circle* and *Armor of God II*. Mar. 7-13: *Mrs. Parker and a Vicious Circle* and *Heavenly Creatures*. Call for showtimes.

*3200 K's, A film by Steve Olpin. Saek Preview Thursday April 13th at Mama's Cafe, 11pm. Tickets are \$3 at the door, for more info call 373-1525.

*Movies 8, call 375-5667; eight great flicks for only \$1.50.

*Academy Theatre/Provo, 56 N. Univ., call 373-4470 for showtimes.

*Carillon Square/Orem, next to Ross, call 224-5112 for showtimes.

*Cineplex Odeon/Orem at Univ. Mall, call 224-6622 for showtimes.

*Central Square Theater/Provo, call 374-6061 for showtimes.

*Scera Theatre/Orem, 745 S. State, call 235-2560 for showtimes.

*Varsity Theatre/BYU Campus, call 378-3311 for showtimes.

*Sundance Film Series; classic films at Sundance for only \$2.50, call 225-4100 for showtimes.

CONCERTS

Kurt Bestor & Sam Cardon perform Innovators, Forever Young Foundation Benefit, Monday, April 17, 7:30pm, at Abravanel Hall. Tickets are \$27.50 & \$37.50 and are available at Capitol Theater and all Art Tix locations. Call 355-ARTS for more info.

Provopalooza: (upstairs) *Peach* (from Seattle), *The Obvious, 3rd Floor* (from Phoenix). (downstairs) *Slackjaw*, *The Vickers*, *Toughskins*, *Penny Royal Crush*, *8 Turtle Stack*. (In the Soul Room) *DJs Foo, Kitten*, and *Delux and the Numbs*. Thursday, April 20, 8pm, at the Edge. Tickets are \$8 at Sonic Garden, etc., or \$12 at the door. For more info. or tickets call 377-1475.

Sound of Sirens & Numbs, Friday, April 28, 8:30pm, at Hangar 18 (430 S. State St.). Tickets are \$3.

Beastie Boys and Jon Spencer Blues Explosion. April 30, at Saltair. Tickets are available at all SmithTixx locations. For more info call 800-888-TIXX.

REM & Sonic Youth, May 23, at the Delta Center, Call 800-888-TIXX for tickets and information.

MUSEUM OF ART

*CCA Christianson's Mormon Panorama: The beehive is beautiful.

Now-Aug.

*150 Years of American Paintings: Now-Aug.

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Utah Symphony, 533-NOTE

UTAH JAZZ, 355-DUNK

The Garrens, 379-8888

Hansen Planetarium, 538-2098

Lenito's, 377-8226

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Pueblo Nuestro Folklore, 773-7104

IRS Questions, 800-829-1040

Mama's Cafe, 373-1525

Avalon Theatre, Murray, 226-0258

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Student Review is a independent student publication serving Utah Valley and its university communities. Because SR aspires to be an open forum, all submissions will be considered for publication.

Views expressed in Student Review are presumably those of the authors, and certainly do not necessarily reflect those of BYU, UVSC, SR, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or The Star Bellied Sneeches

A NOTE FROM SCOTT:

I'm Scott, Scott Whitmore. I do the design and layout of the paper. I have a grand time playing on the computer. I enjoy design, but that, my friend, is not where my story begins.

My Story

It was an overcast, ominous, opulent, oppressive, occidental Tuesday in September of 1991 when Matt and I decided to enter the dreaded, devious, devilish, daring, dark realm of the unknown and go to a *Student Review* meeting Up to that point my contact with the *Review* had been minimal. I had read it as a freshman and even submitted an article with my roommate that got published, but in my mind those "Student Review people" were about five super intelligent radicals living in a basement somewhere passing their mighty judgement on anything they deemed worthy of their mighty intellectual powers. They were beyond my understanding and far too powerful to be approached by a weak, weenie freshman. But upon returning from my mission I was filled with the power of cluelessness and talked my roommate into going to a meeting with me.

Its always a bit disconcerting to enter a situation where everyone knows everyone except for you and they all seem to be funnier and smarter than you, and that is definitely how we felt after crawling away from our first meeting. But our determination was not hindered and the now legendary Joanna Brooks quickly took us under her wing and raised us up on wit and a good portion of sarcasm. She was the Campus Life editor at the time and since we postured ourselves to be comedians of some sort that is where we were drawn. Our first article was a feeble attempt to poke fun at the MTC and never saw the light of day. After a stern lecture on how to be funny we pressed on. Within weeks we had become fast friends with the other campus lifers and were starting to initiate unprovoked conversations at the meetings. After a few months we had something published and were feeling more and more confident with our status. Then, at the end of October, came the big moment when we both wrote articles for an issue and they appeared one on top of the other in the pole position on page 3. It was a proud day and a day not soon forgotten. We had made our mark and we were on our way.

From there, there was no stopping us. Much like the breakers in *Electric Boogaloo* we were on our way to the top. Our names began to be mentioned at the meetings and once Editor-in-Chief even spoke to me, calling me by my name ("Hey Campus Life guy"). Our articles started to appear regularly and we began to regularly point and laugh at the newcomers that said dumb things in the meetings.

Within a few semesters I was Campus Life Editor and Matt had started his own weekly column. Our reign of power and might had begun. A year later I became Editor-In-Chief and Matt was one of the most recognized names in the history of the paper and wielded the mighty sword of dominion over our inferiors.

Today we continue to carry the scalding torch and soon we will pass in on to the next generation of frightened newcomers. We will move on to the great beyond and some schmuck like you reading this right now will take the reigns and drive the paper into submission, for without us you are nothing, we are the mighty ones, the ones who bring terror to those that opoose us. We will reign forever!

Wait, I guess that's not the point of this note. The idea is you should get involved too and you'll have lots of fun and meet nice people, and that *Student Review* is important.

The End

STAFFPERSON OF THE WEEK:

Ms. Felicity Hamilton, our Religion Editor, gets the coveted spotlight this week, if for no other reason than because she took the job of Religion Editor in the first place (a position no wanted at the time). Felicity is a great editor, a wonderful writer and just an all-around good human being. All hail Ms. Hamilton!

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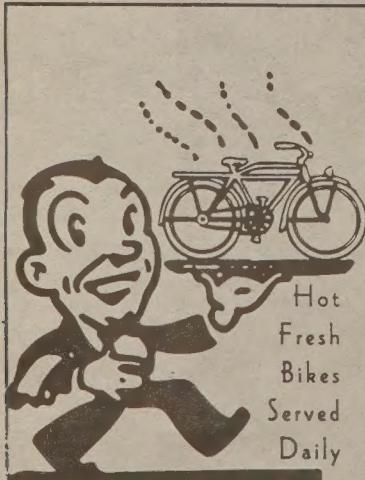


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CLARK J. MCBRIDE PRESENTS

THE LOST BOOK OF ALMA, THE YOUNGER

I, Alma the Younger, having witnessed much insanity in my day, and being put under the subjugation of my parents do hereby write my record in order for the world to know what a party animal a supposed "prophet" son may be.

And it came to pass in my 19th year of life I was accepted to Nephi University, in the heart of downtown Zarahemla, and did begin my attending in the order of maize cultivation.

And it came to pass that during this time, the sons of Mosiah, being the largest brotherhood on campus and having the most ravishing females attending their socials, did accept me into their ranks after I passed a week of spanking, eating barracuda, and fruiting the dean's hut. Upon my acceptance there was a great celebration within the campus and the brothers of Aaron managed to tar the Lehi Fertilization Administration pyramid with acacia leaves.

And it came to pass that campus security did spot us and we did manage to escape by the power of our own hands, tying the security guards in lama cord. We then went and partied heavily over at Ammon's hut, wenching much and trying out some pears we had left out in a hot container to juice for over a month.

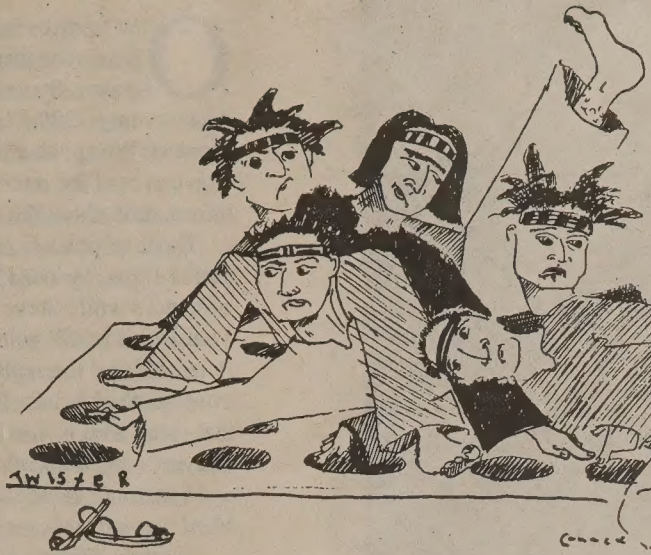
And it came to pass that my father did call me in and ask me how studies were and it came to pass that I did tell him that I was attending a local Nephi singles ward and he

bought it. And after that meeting I had to perform for a talent circus at the King Benjamin Arts Adobe Hut, but before I started my act, I formed a circle of friends and prayed to

Buddha that Tricia may remember to grab my crotch during the "Vogue" chant.

And it came to pass that Aaron, one of the sons of Mosiah, came in afterwards to show us a plant he had found in the backyard, that when smoked causes strange effects.

And it came to pass that father was out of town, preaching to the people in the land



of Bountiful, and so we had a raging party wherein we smoked the leafs of this plant and drank more fermented pears.

And it came to pass that father came home early to find me perched over the bucket, my head sore and

my stomach turning in circles. And so father punished me and commanded me to read the whole Book of Lehi, from beginning tablet to ending tablet. And while I was reading I did scrape some of the markings off the plates of Lehi and rejoiced exceedingly. And the big game came around again between Nephi U and Zarahemla U.

And it came to pass that me and the sons of Mosiah did go out and pierce our noses in celebration of our great victory over Zarahemla U and did go down and burn the Zarahemla mascot and offer him up as a sacrifice. Poor Fire Ant.

And it came to pass that Omner, a son of Mosiah, did practice in the arts of herbs and vegetations and we did convince him to create a potion that would take the color out of hair, and so we did put this concoction in the females' watering hole. And so a great deal of females now possess long white hairs. And we did party heavily again when my father left to preach yet again across the land, and we did take the plates of brass and use them as flying disks, and created a pattern of plates on the ground. We did spin an arrow that commanded us to place either left or right hands, or left or right feet on certain plates. For example, right hand on First Nephi chapter one and left hand on Book of Enos. And much fun was attained, and the plates of brass were slightly dented, so me and the sons of Mosiah went to a metalsmith and had him create a copy of the brass plates made out of zinc. Then we melted down the brass

plates for jewelry, all the while fooling father into thinking that the plates of zinc were the plates of brass.

And it came to pass that Nephi U. was about to finish with its first year and hence we were commanded to talk to a bishop and receive a writ on clay, approving us

SEE "ALMA" ON PG. 6

TOP TWENTY

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. you | 6. plain or homely women | 11. extended ski season | 16. slings |
| 2. shrimp | 7. Rusted Root | 12. Barcelona | 17. Sade |
| 3. feet | 8. ice hockey | 13. water | 18. Cheez Wiz |
| 4. Thelonius Monk | 9. Talk Soup | 14. textured walls | 19. photo albums |
| 5. kitchen tables | 10. cellos | 15. home teaching | 20. frosted lipstick |

BOTTOM TEN

rotator cuffs, tax returns, falling down, holes in your shoe, trying very, very hard to stay awake while listening to a Richard G. Scott talk and failing, root canals, carbon monoxide, moldy ketchup, automobile maintenance, that one teacher

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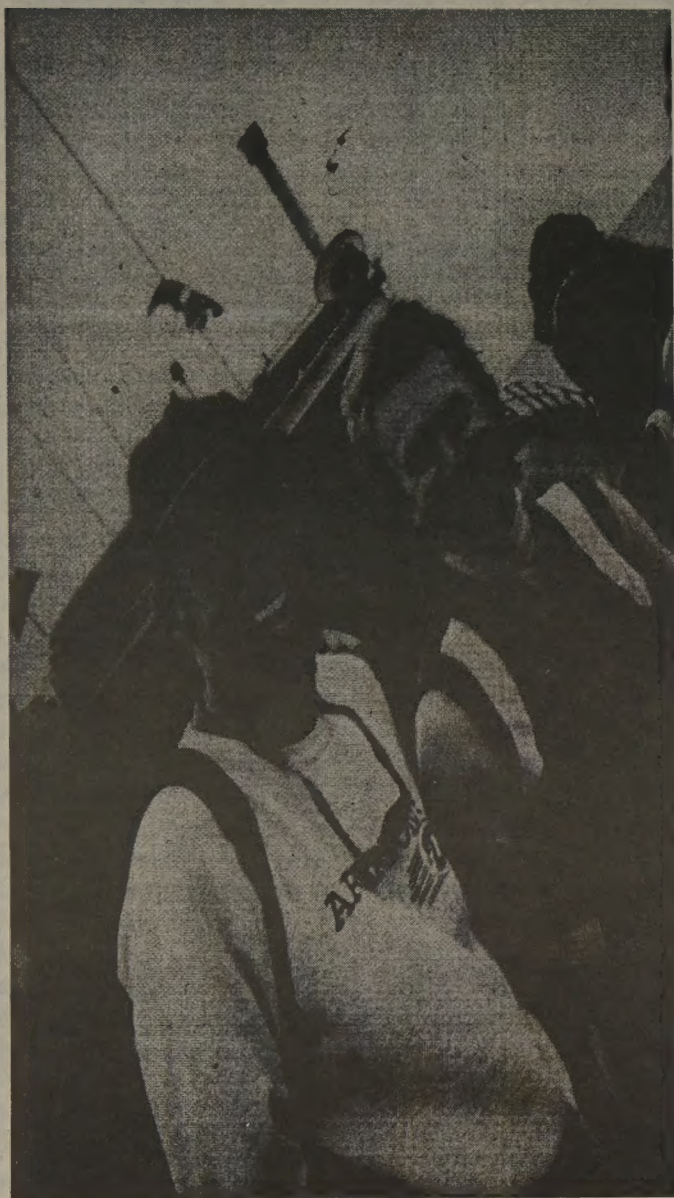
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AN INTERVIEW WITH FILMMAKER STEVE OLPIN.

BY MATTHEW WORKMAN

MW: So how do you eat?
SO: Huh?
MW: You've quit your day job and devoted yourself to your films. So how do you put food in your mouth while still making the films you want?
SO: I quit my day job about two years ago. Now I do what I want to do, and some people pay me for it. I've been lucky enough to get hold of some grant money from some very nice people. (No filmmaker ever tells where he gets his grants from.) Some nice people have believed in what I've been doing and have been giving me money to do what I want to do and do it the way I want to do it—which is the luckiest thing in the world. So that's how I pay. And I do a little bit of work in free-lance filmwork. So when Hollywood films come through town...
MW: *Halloween 666*?
SO: *Halloween 666*. I worked two or three days on that and a few days on that always pays the bills for quite a while because Hollywood pays well. But that's not where my interests lie.
MW: So were they filming here or in Hollywood?
SO: In Salt Lake. The whole thing. Most of the *Halloween* shows have been shot in Salt Lake.
MW: Really?
SO: Oh yeah, and this one was great. (extreme sarcasm)
MW: I'll have to rent the old ones and see.
SO: But it's the grant money thing. I like to look at it more like this: I have really chased what I've wanted to do, and it has paid off. I haven't had a backup plan. But I think the reason I've been sexual...
MW: (hearty laugh)
SO: Excuse me... I've been *successful*, is because I've been chasing it as hard as I could. People have been responding to what I've been doing. I don't know why. I didn't try to make anything really marketable. That's not what I want to do. I just want to sit at a coffee table and talk to interesting people and put it on film. And people have liked it. It's working out. I don't know if it'll work forever, but it's working now. So I'll just be happy.
MW: Have any of your documentaries been profitable? What's *Potter's Meal* doing lately?
SO: *The Potter's Meal* slowly brings money back to me. It continues to sell to art centers and universities and schools. I get checks in the mail, people have seen the



movie and want to buy it. I may have made money off that film. It's still being shown.
MW: Where?
SO: In art schools, art classes. The weirdest things happen. I just got a call, some guy from Florida had seen it at some conference. We don't know how he got the tape, but he had seen it at some conference and wanted a copy for himself. I've heard of businesses using it for a motivational thing.
MW: Businesses?
SO: Yeah, they showed it at some managers meeting, it doesn't make any sense to me. But it shows up everywhere.
MW: TV?
SO: Not yet.
MW: So what's up with *Hoop Dreams* not getting nominated?
SO: Oh, *Hoop Dreams* didn't get nominated, *Roger and Me* didn't get nominated, *Heart of Darkness*, *The Thin Blue Line* didn't get nominated. As a documentary guy, I respect those films. All those films were good and very popular documentaries and none of them got nominated. I loved *Hoop Dreams* and think it should have gotten nominated.
MW: It seemed that their only crime was they made a good film that people wanted to see.
SO: I don't know. The documentary section for the Academy Awards has always been a little weird. I wasn't too shocked by it. I thought it was really stupid, though, that they wanted to get Best Picture. But I think they should have gotten a Best Documentary nomination.
MW: I thought it was one of the best films I've seen all year... In your previous movies, I noticed a theme. Like in *Upward Vertical Movement* and *Potter's Meal*, I thought they were both nuts when I saw the film. But by the end, I respected the both of them because they had very strong sets of beliefs and aligned their whole lives so they could live by them. They somehow

(SEE OTHER SIDE)

3200 K'S: "IT'S NOT A TRAVELOGUE, IT'S A CHARACTER STUDY"

BY MATTHEW WORKMAN

One rainy evening I went to the cluttered office of Windstone Films (the office is smaller than my bedroom) to meet with Provo's own independent film maker, Steve Olpin. My purpose was to speak with him about his newest documentary *3200 K's*, which premieres in Provo this week. It didn't quite go as I planned. We spoke about many subjects, but the movie only came up at the very end. You can read the interview in this section, but I thought I should give you some information about the film and filmmaker before this goes any further.

Those of you who don't recognize the name Steve Olpin may recognize one of his earlier films. *Upward Vertical Movement* and *The Potter's Meal* both played to BYU audiences while Steve was attending school here. The latter won several national awards and is still being shown at various odd venues across America. (While *The Potter's Meal* is a really big-deal documentary, I should note that it did not win the top award at the Mama's Film Festival in 1993. That prize, and the \$7.50 that came with it, was handed to *Why Ronnie Shot Thayne*, a movie produced by my roommates and I with our camcorder. *The Potter's Meal* was a distant second.)

Anyway, Olpin's latest film concerns two Australians who ride their bicycles along the Pacific coast from Canada to Mexico. Along the way they meet an assortment of colorful characters and the viewer learns the two Australians' unique angles on life.

Yes, I know that's a pretty lame plot summary, but it's not an easy film to describe. Olpin himself has trouble categorizing the film. "It's just two guys stumbling down the coast." He went on to describe the film as, "insignificant but interesting." Perhaps the best description came from one of Olpin's former professors, Dean Duncan: "It's not a travelogue, it's a character study, and a strong one at that."

The difficulty in describing the film may come from the fact that it's not like many films that are currently in release. It's a documentary (not a terribly popular form), and it's about two pretty normal people accomplishing a relatively easy task. No Brad Pitt, no Sharon Stone. "It's not a McMovie, not very Hollywood," said Olpin. "I'm not sure if people who go to Movies 8 a lot will like it. It moves a lot differently than one of those films."

The film came together after Olpin and a friend met the Australian subjects while on a similar bike trip down the Pacific. That was in 1990. For several years after, they kept in touch until they could arrange another trip in August of 1992. It is this trip that is documented in *3200 K's*.

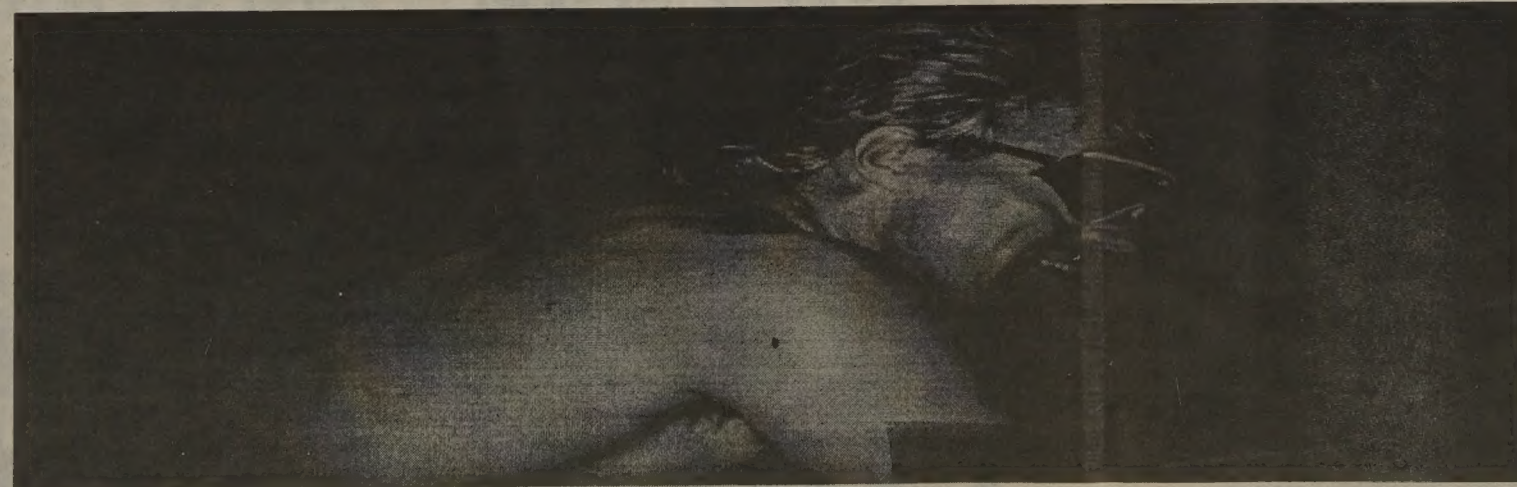
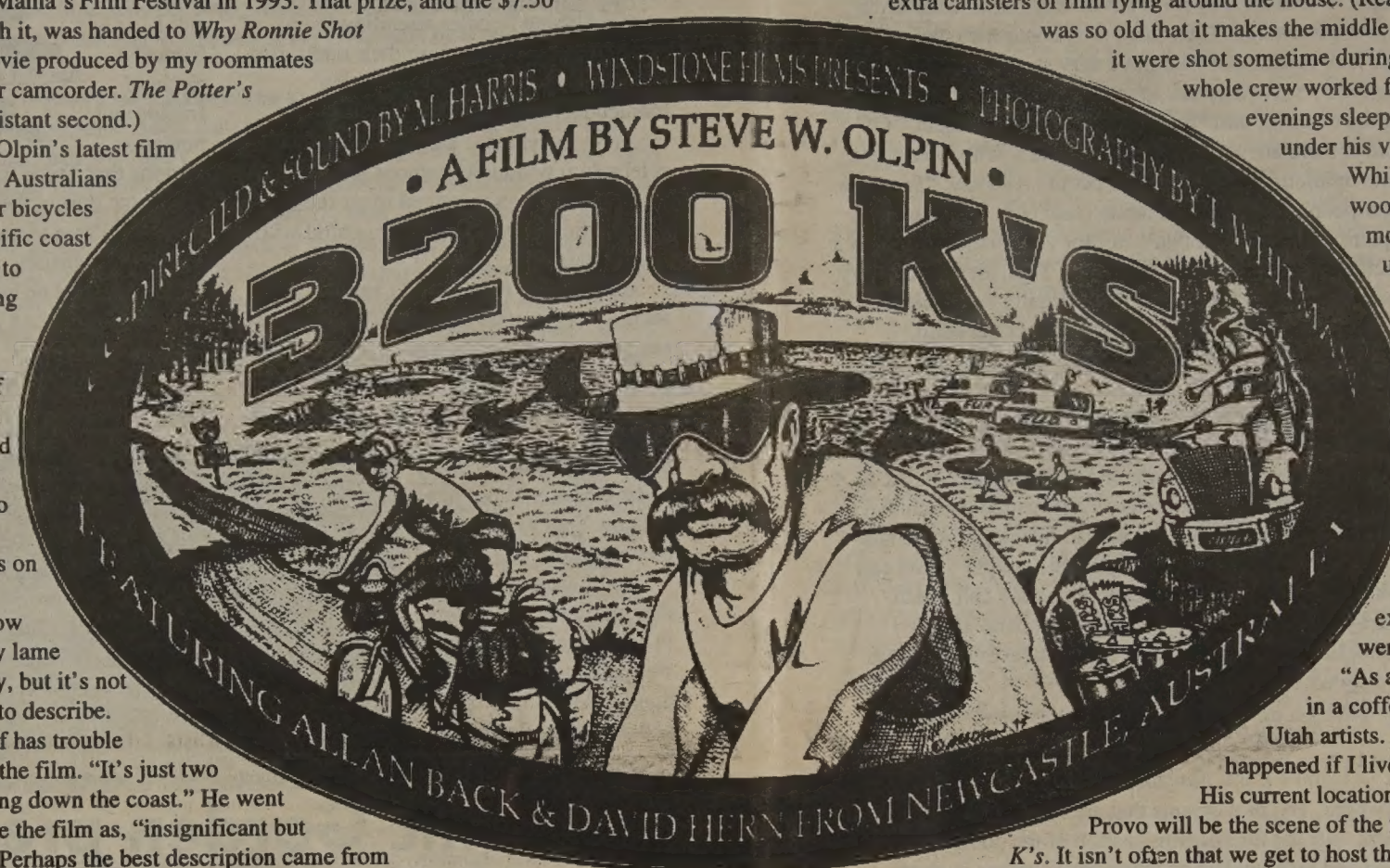
The movie was made on a budget that couldn't get much lower. Olpin sold his car and bought about \$2,000 in film. The rest of the film was donated by people who had extra canisters of film lying around the house. (Really!) Some of the film was so old that it makes the middle of the movie look as if it were shot sometime during the Vietnam War. The whole crew worked for free. Olpin spent his evenings sleeping in a sleeping bag under his van.

While the normal Hollywood director wouldn't last more than a few hours under such conditions, Olpin seems to thrive.

He spoke fondly of the process of "going out with a camera and no money and seeing what you get." When asked why he has stayed in Provo instead of moving to Hollywood, Olpin explained that things were going too well here.

"As a matter of fact, I appear in a coffee table book about Utah artists. I doubt that would have happened if I lived elsewhere."

His current location is fortunate for us as Provo will be the scene of the first screening of *3200 K's*. It isn't often that we get to host the world premiere of any film, so this may be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many of us. Who knows, the award-winning *Why Ronnie Shot Thayne* may very well be the opening feature. Either way it's an event not to be missed.



3200K's showings

April 13, 11:00 p.m.,

Mama's Cafe, Provo

April 8, Canyonlands Alternative Film and Video Festival, Moab

Salt Lake Arts Center
 (Next to Symphony

Hall)



made it fit. Do you select your subjects because you feel a certain affinity for them?

SO: That's a cool observation. What was the question?

MW: I don't know. I just wanted to bounce that idea off of you. I guess what I'm getting at is that I can see some of those traits in you. For instance, you want to make your films your way, regardless of whether or not they make money. So you've arranged your life so you can do that, even though it would seem impossible to do. I don't know if there's a question there, just say something.

SO: Well, every person I've made a movie about, I've been nuts about their ideas. I think they're the coolest. When I did the film about the rock climber, I thought he was funny, I thought he was entertaining. I thought, "I just want to sit back and watch this guy for ten minutes. That's what I want this film to be about. It'll give me an excuse to hang out with him and hear his jokes and watch him get wacky." With Bennion (*Potter's Meal*) I just thought, "This guy's got some great ideas." Now I'm doing a piece about Paul Cox and I'm just blown away by his ideas.

MW: He spoke in a class of mine. It was incredible.

SO: My whole life seems to be finding incredibly interesting people that are very passionate about what they're doing, and then hanging out with them. I've been accused of having an "organic" style of filmmaking. I don't know what that means, but it felt like a compliment to me.

MW: So when's the Paul Cox thing coming out?

SO: This summer, hopefully. The name of the film is going to be "Consider the Lilies." Basically what we're going to do is spend an hour talking about plants. An hour with plants! In the beginning of the film, Paul says, "When Jesus says, 'consider the lilies,' it wasn't just poetic expression, it is an imperative." It's going to be cool. I've been to Samoa twice with him. The second time we went to hang out with the healers in Samoa and watch them do their work. We went through the rain forest, got rained on. Everybody got sick, I didn't get too sick. It changed my life.

There's some interesting things going on in Samoa, it's absolutely incredible.
MW: Working on anything else?
SO: I'm doing one about the artist who did the piece at the art museum at BYU. A New York artist, non-LDS. He did this piece called "Seer." Real interesting piece of art. I'm doing a piece about him. That's one of the only films where someone called me and said, "would you like to do a film about this guy?" I lucked out because this guy was very passionate, very cool, very entertaining. It was kind of risky, but you take what you can when you're an independent buy. It turned out to be really, really good.

MW: What's the guy's name?
SO: Brower Hatcher. But those are my short-term projects. There are two longer ones. One of them should take at least ten years, the other about five. One of them is about this guy in law school, a huge guy, and the funniest man I ever met. One of the smartest, also. He says he's going to be a millionaire and sue everybody he can get his hands on. So I go visit him every three to six months. I'm convinced that in ten years he'll be a millionaire, or in prison...he'll be somewhere interesting.
MW: So he's not a man hurtling towards mediocrity?
SO: No, no. Hurtling towards mediocrity. Can I quote you on that? I like that. So anyway, I'm also working on this Quinn

thing, should I talk about that?

MW: Sure.

SO: Last year I was in the mood for some local music. I go to see Kim Simpson, and there's some guy playing before him. I didn't even look at the name. I intentionally bought my ticket late and went away in hopes I would miss this guy. I only wanted to see Kim. I ended up stumbling in and seeing this guy named Quinn Luke. First song, I thought, "this guy's pretty good." Second song, I was blown away. Third song, I went nuts. I thought, "this guy is the most talented guy I have ever seen." I try to explain what he's like to people, and I say, "if you could cross Stevie Wonder and Luciano Pavarotti, this is what you would get." I was blown away. I knew I had to do something on film with this guy, I didn't know what. So I decided, they're (the members of Lamont Central) moving to San Francisco, I'll go visit them every six months, and it'll be an interesting film. I don't know what'll happen, but I'm convinced he'll be bigger than the Beatles.

As a matter of fact, they're all really talented. Pat (Campbell) and Kent (Carter) are great to talk to. They're all really intensely into music and I think they're all going to make it.

MW: I agree.
SO: It's really cool to hang out with musicians. I've never hung out with real musicians before. These guys are *real* musicians. These guys are really excited about going for it and putting everything on the line. It's intense.

MW: They've got some new songs.
SO: Oooh. We have to go out there. Are you ready for a road trip?
MW: Name your day.

SO: We have to go! People in newspaper land should know that you and I hung out together in San Francisco—overeating and making movies. Big fun.

MW: I was being Best Boy, right?
SO: Oh yeah, I've declared you Best Boy for everything I do now. You really are the Best Boy.

MW: Swimpigs said I could be Best Boy if they put out another album. I'm pretty excited.
SO: You'll do well.

MW: Thanks.
SO: This is exciting to me. I'm at a point in my career where sometimes at night, I can't sleep. I'm so excited about it. I just feel that I'm someone incredibly blessed, and incredibly lucky to be able to survive and make a little bit of a living doing exactly what I want to do. It's a good thing. It doesn't happen to everybody.

MW: That sounds like a good end for an interview.
SO: We should mention my wife, Noelle. And my dog. I guess we should also mention something about *3200 K's*.
MW: I have written here that *3200 K's* is a movie.

SO: I really like the idea of doing an interview or making a film about something but not addressing the subject until the end. It seems more interesting that way.
MW: Well, I think we just did it.

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Religion

AN INTERVIEW WITH *SUNSTONE*'S ELBERT EUGENE PECK

FELICITY HAMILTON



Sunstone was created in 1974 by a group of students, not much unlike ourselves, as a student journal with the purpose of studying Mormonism. They were young members of the LDS church who wanted to "attract the best efforts of young Latter-day Saints who, true to the faith that their fathers have cherished, will raise the questions, pursue the discussions and bear the witness worthy of a living faith that is both intellectually vigorous and spiritually discerning...Sunstone is an expression of faith in the commitment, insight and integrity of youth—and the working of God among them" (Scott Kenney, *Sunstone*, Winter 1975, page 7). Whether or not you agree that the editors have fulfilled this lofty goal, they began *Sunstone*, in part, for us—the youth of the church, who as we grow, cause the church to grow with us.

Now, twenty-one years later, Elbert Eugene Peck is the editor and publisher. He has been in that position for nine years now. He graduated from BYU with the intention of being a city planner. While he was at BYU, he edited the *Seventh East Press*, which is a precursor to *Student Review*. While the *Seventh East Press* didn't last very long, *Sunstone* has, and will continue to, as long as there are people like Elbert Peck who continue to believe in it and in its importance to the Mormon community. I recently had the opportunity to sit down with Elbert for a few minutes and interview him about some of his thoughts on *Sunstone*.

Q : Why did you become involved with *Sunstone* to begin with?

A : Because I was the editor of the *Seventh East Press*, and while editing that newspaper I got to know the editors of *Sunstone*. I started reading the magazine. And because I was doing *Seventh East Press*, I became interested in Mormon history and the players in the Mormon scholarly community, and that leads one to *Sunstone*. It was natural, then, for *Sunstone* editor Peggy Fletcher, to offer me a job.

Q : What do you want *Sunstone* to accomplish?

A : I think *Sunstone* publishes some very important articles that contribute to our understanding of what it means to be a Mormon in the late twentieth century. Through fiction and poetry, and through its history and

contemporary issues articles, it makes an important contribution. However, I think the most important role *Sunstone* plays, is in the very fact that it is an independent forum for the discussion of Mormonism—where people, without censure, without comments, can authentically share their experience, their research, their opinions, in a reasoned, intelligent discussion. Having that forum is important for modern Mormonism, and *Sunstone* is one of the places where it occurs. Because *Sunstone* is where it is, it creates the space where other forums can also exist—sometimes in response to *Sunstone*, sometimes just because *Sunstone*'s existence gives people the permission to make their own forum. Such independent discussion in Mormonism is crucial to a healthy, living religion.

Q : I read an article a while ago, which you wrote, about engaging the conversation in the foyer. Is that what *Sunstone* tries to do, to bring the conversation from the foyer onto paper?

A : Yes. My metaphor of the foyer was to explain *Sunstone*'s role vis-a-vis the institutional church. *Sunstone* is a part of our religious community, just like the free-wheeling discussions that happen in the foyer of the church are part of the religious community: they are essential to what we are about as a community, they help the binding of hearts and the informal sharing of information and speculative thinking. Yet there is a tension between what happens in the foyer and the institutional church. If you are chatting in the foyer during Sunday School and the bishop walks by—he's a little nervous about what you are doing, although he does it, too, on occasion. He did it before he was bishop and he will do it after he is released. But such unscripted, open discussion is crucial to the social bonding that happens in the church. Still you don't want the same kind of conversations that happen in the foyer to be preached over the pulpit in the chapel—that is the role of the institutional church. But they are both essential to a lively, healthy community and are the same people who chat in the foyer and preach over the pulpit. *Sunstone* is kind of a formalized group of those freewheeling, independent foyer discussions. And, too, for the most part, people who converse in the *Sunstone* foyer are also active participants in the chapel. I think students need to get hooked into that independent Mormon conversation and by reading *Sunstone* and coming to the symposiums they can sort of join in on the grand discussion of Mormonism which is happening in the church.

Q : Does it seem like there are fewer young people getting involved in *Sunstone* and Mormon studies?

A : It's hard to say, people always make that comment—they talk about the graying of *Sunstone* or the graying of the Mormon History Association. I suspect, though, that it has always been the case, that there haven't been many young students. Particularly if we are talking about undergraduates. *Sunstone* was organized primarily by graduate students at Berkeley, and some undergraduates at BYU; but by and large, they were graduate students. The same was true of *Dialogue*.

The Mormon church, for whatever reasons, does not raise questioning youth. Partly that is because of our correlated way of teaching. We teach people answers rather than questions; and Mormonism, by its nature, as a religion, says, "here are the answers to the world's problems." It's only when you get a little more life under

your belt and you're in graduate school that you do critical questioning of your religious life. When you've lived life a little more as a parent and as an adult, then you see that everything is not so black and white; then you start seeing the ambiguity and shades of gray. Then a magazine like *Sunstone* appeals to you because of the kinds of issues it explores. For many Mormons, that happens later in life. It's really sad that there aren't that many youth—teenagers, late teenagers, and college undergraduates—who are questioning. But we don't teach them to question.

Q : What do you think people think of *Sunstone*?

A : Of course, different people think different things. Most people don't think of *Sunstone* at all; if you ask most people at church, they have never heard of it. That is the largest percentage. Then there are people who have never seen it or read it, but who have very strong opinions about it and they say, "they are apostates," and "they are attacking the church," and "the church doesn't like them." Of course, there are people who have read it who have those same opinions. There are other people who say, "*Sunstone* is for people who have an intellectual bent and like to explore questions, but that's not for me," which I think is a much more healthy, adult approach. Then there is the very small minority in the church who actually read *Sunstone*. *Sunstone* has about 10,000 subscribers of the adult, educated, Mormon population in the United States. Ten thousand is a very, very small number, but that is okay. In many religions, a magazine like *Sunstone* is only read by the clergy. Here is a lively, vibrant part of Mormonism for people who want to be involved in that expansive discussion. I don't think *Sunstone* goes against the church, but it is willing to honestly ask questions. In spite of its reputation, there are vastly more articles that people would call "faith promoting" than what people would call "faith destroying." I think they are looking at some of our assumptions and saying, "that may not be true or true in the way we always thought."

Q : Where do you think *Sunstone* is taking Mormonism?

A : I don't think *Sunstone* is taking Mormonism anywhere. The movements that are taking Mormonism places, like the internationalization of the church, are so broad and independent of whatever *Sunstone* is about, *Sunstone* isn't taking Mormonism anywhere.

Probably where Mormonism is taking *Sunstone* is to a larger population base. As the church grows and becomes more educated, more people are going to subscribe to *Sunstone*, but it will always be a small educated elite in the church who read and discuss *Sunstone*. Some things that *Sunstone* talks about will have an effect on the church, some have already because people read it and say, "yeah, that is a problem, we should address it," or "yeah, that is a good idea, let's implement it." But that isn't the role of *Sunstone*, it isn't a lobbyist to the Brethren for reform. It is an independent forum for discussion, and in that sense it isn't trying to take the Church anywhere, other than to say, let's have a discussion of Mormonism.

An independent forum is important for several reasons—first of all, the church should not be seen as sponsoring any ideas that aren't part of its core mission. So people need to be able to talk about ideas without worrying whether or not this idea is church-endorsed. That independence is a service to the institutional church; it frees it from having to worry about presumed endorsement, which is a major problem at BYU. It is hard for some professors to speak their own mind because they will worry that someone will think that the church approves of their idea. That is crazy—open expression and discussion of ideas is what a university is about, and that is why you need independence.

We also need independent forums so that people can, with authenticity, share their experiences and their ideas. There is a big difference between reading a testimony that is printed in *Sunstone*, where the person says, "I didn't believe this, and I doubted this, and I still have many doubts, but this is what I now believe and why." You know that person is speaking to you completely honestly. When you read an article in the *Ensign*, it has been edited and correlated; the individual journey is diminished by the institutional need to promote the ideal. I don't fault the church for holding up an ideal model; but I do find a lack of individual genuineness in much of its materials. There needs to be someplace where people can be completely honest. *Sunstone* is one such place; it's the believably honest conversation in the lobby, not the chapel sermons.

CONTINUED...

ALMA

for another year. Hence I went and talked to this bishop and told him what he wanted to hear and did receive that writ and thus I am not forced to attend Zarahemla U. The sons of Mosiah too are excellent liars and received their writs and it came to pass that we decided to rent a hut together and move out of our fathers' huts.

And it came to pass that we grew special exotic herbs and plants in our backyard, and did toil with souring fruits for our benefit and we did continually order takeout maize from Little Zorams across the street. And women aplenty did visit and toil in our hut, working diligently to please us. And we did string acacia leaves over our hut roof and did call our house the brotherhood of Laman. Hence we began to study our brethren the Lamanites at the LRC to learn what exotic intoxicants they did use and possess. And I took it upon myself to create a Gay and Lesbian Alliance, even though I wasn't gay or lesbian and did go out all the days of Spring Break convincing the youth of Nephi U to turn gay or lesbian. And this did displease father. And after that little romp in good fun I did work with the brotherhood of Laman in creating an underground journal and did study predominantly the works of Saul.

And it came to pass that one day I and the sons of Mosiah were smoking on some of that plant and we did pass out and when we awoke our house was on fire so we fled and lost all our possessions. And it came to pass that my father did come down to the burning embers of our house and did scold me and commanded me to write this stupid journal, so that my posterity may be able to reflect on the lessons that I have learned here at Nephi U. And it came to pass that my father did say with much vexation that I had better straighten up or an angel would strike me down. Whatever.

And so it is with much regret that I waste my time scribbling this message daily on these zinc plates.

Issues & Opinions

ON MORALITY

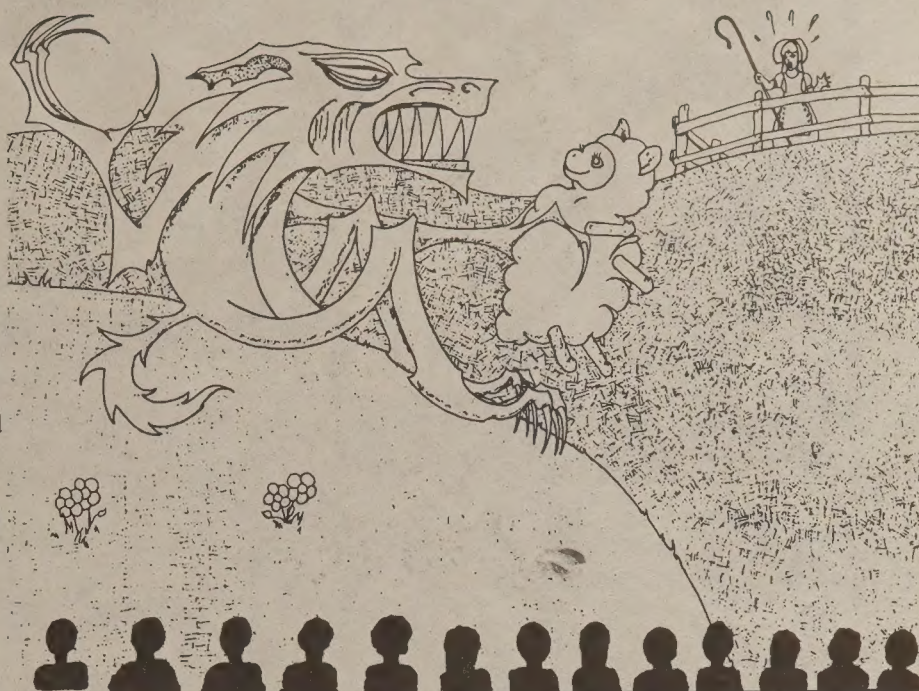
BY SUZANNE BENNER

A few Saturdays ago I walked up to Classic Cinema to see a movie for my film class. None of the movies we are assigned to see are R-rated, which we can attribute to BYU policy. Anyway, I start to go in to this non-R-rated movie, which I am assigned to see for a class. I offer my money to the cashier-guy, and he says, "we can only admit people with season passes." I said, "I'm in the film class, and I have to see this movie so I can write a paper on it and pass the class." He says, "I'm sorry, we can't let you in." I said, "Okay then, remove me from the theater." I tossed my money on the table and walked in. I sat there cringing for a few minutes, thinking they might try to kick me out, but pretty soon they started the movie, and I relaxed.

Later, in class, I asked my teacher why I was denied admittance in the first place, and he told me that someone had written a letter complaining about some of the films. One person complains, and suddenly BYU changes their policy. The film class already offers optional films to anyone who is morally opposed to the Classic Cinema fare. If BYU has a policy against R-rated films, then good; let's stick to it. But why do we suddenly have a "policy" against any movie that someone complains about? People complain about Shakespeare too, but that doesn't mean that we should restrict Shakespeare assignments only to Shakespeare classes. This Classic Cinema policy seems to assume that season-pass holders are somehow immune to the inherent "evil" in the movie (which I found inoffensive) but that we need to protect the "masses."

This "policy" seems even more ridiculous in light of the practices of some of my professors. I had a class once in which we frequently discussed erotic stories. Many of these stories seemed to me to be written purely for the shock value, and I am sure if I wrote a letter of complaint to Rex Lee, my teacher would get in trouble. I don't really get into erotic stories, so I skipped the class a lot but I don't want to get anyone in trouble. My opinion of those stories is not necessarily the "correct" one, it is just mine. That is the problem: BYU's policy seems to be trying to accommodate everyone's whims. The few people who write letters to the administration should not have the power to automatically change policies or get people in trouble. I should not have that power but I do. If I complain to standards about my teachers or my roommates, then I can get them in trouble. Where is the rationality or consistency in BYU policy? I understand the difficulty in getting everyone to agree to certain standards. Sometimes things that seem wrong to some can actually be teaching moral values. Does Michelangelo's *David* represent pornography or the glory of life and humanity? (Or none of the above?) Seriously though, despite the difficulty, we need to set some standards, and then not go below or "above" them. What happened to teaching correct principles and letting the people govern themselves? Why don't we set a standard, and then let the professors (who have, I suppose, passed the morality interview required to gain employment at BYU) govern their classes?

There is a difference between morality and the sickly-sweet "mollyism" that many people on campus promote, and we can't just keep adhering to the opinions of every letter-writer without becoming hyper-holy, like the Jews who were adding to the Law of Moses. I admire the gospel standards, and I try to live by them but I don't think that I should be denied admittance to Classic Cinema just because somebody wrote a letter.



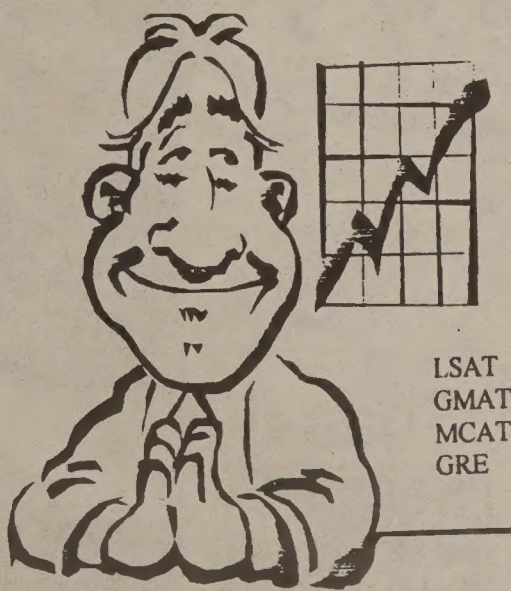
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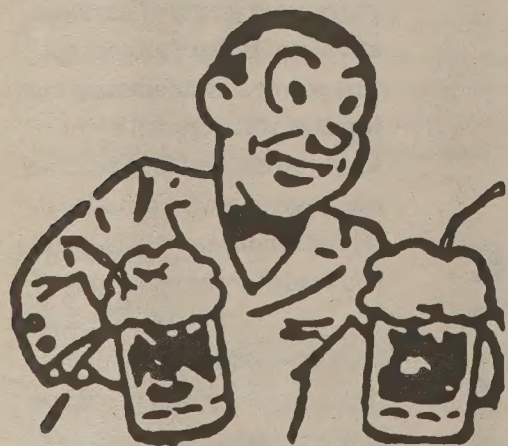
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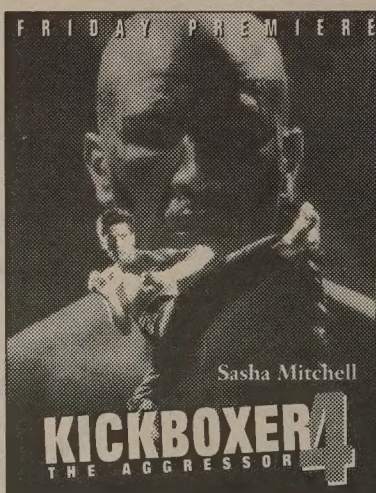
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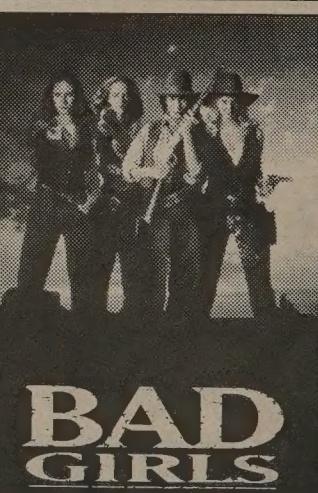
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